10: d'Orleans--308-311 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 582, 684, 836, 848

"Some flirtations are durable, for a young man who has paid court for a long time to a girl generally ends by making her his mistress, but this is not looked upon as at all dishonourable, for there are a great many unmarried women mothers, and some of them are held in as much respect as those [pages 309 and 310 contain illustration] [311] that are married, while marriage often follows the birth of a child. Moreover, if the girl informs her parents and reveals the name of her lover, the latter is bound to pay a fine of about fifteen rupees, or to marry her. All assaults upon women are taxed at varying rates, there being different fines for a kiss upon the mouth or upon the arm, and for rape."

10: d'Orleans--311 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 586, 593, 627, 684, 837

"Adultery with a married woman, which is of very rare occurrence, entails a fine of 200 rupees; but, after having been very gay in their youth, husband and wife generally settle down quietly, the former often taking it out of his wife for her unceremonious treatment of him beforehand. I happened, while walking about the town one morning, to witness one of these little family scenes. A woman was shrieking and crying because her husband had been beating her, and when I came to question the pair, the man complained that his wife, who had been out to market, had not returned by nine o'clock to get his breakfast ready, so she must have stopped to gossip on the way. Her answer was that she had not heard the gong strike the hour, that she had not stopped on the way home, and that there was no reason why she should have had a beating. The quarrel was eventually made up without having recourse to a divorce, which, though legally recognised, is rarely resorted to."

23: Franck--257-258 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 684, 834

"The conversation hovered chiefly about the women of Laos. The lieutenant [EJ: an officer in the Foreign Legion stationed in Laos] asserted, and was borne out by his wilderness companion of the sex under discussion, that to touch the [258] hair or breasts of a Laosian woman is a more serious crime than actual violation. In fact Laosian law prescribes a much more serious penalty for the former than for the latter indiscretion, and the lieutenant in his judicial capacity had often been called upon to try cases under this strange code. Naturally, he explained, again abetted by his lady-love, what the Western world considers the lesser of the two crimes might be committed entirely against the will of the victim, while the other...In brief, here was an example of Oriental wisdom to which the other side of the earth has not yet attained.

In a case of what, in the language we were then using, is called tromper le mari, the Laosians again outdid us in their sense of justice. By their law the lover is punished for the first offense, the woman for the second, and the husband for the third! For, as the lieutenant said, and his domestic partner again agreed, the woman who is party to such an act a second time must have some of the guilt; and the husband who is so inattentive as to be trompé three times is either a fool or is knowingly permitting it, and deserves punishment in either case."

23: Franck--290-291 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 142, 684

"Though they did not thrust themselves forward, the women of this region were not so retiring as those of most of the Orient. Some of them were distinctly good-looking, well formed, their skin of an almost golden color, enhanced by the frequent bathing of most tropical peoples; and at least one of these village maidens would not have looked at all out of place in a famous Broadway review--[291] except that she was far too modest both in dress and demeanor for such company. With the conversation at Muongsen still in mind, I took care not to touch these fair damsels in getting photographs of them, though with difficulty, since it has become almost second nature during two decades of wandering among camera-shy peoples to arrange by hand my subjects to the camera's liking. It would have been a sad ending to so officially attested a trip to have been charged with one of the most serious crimes in the Laosian code!"

285 lacquer -- red on the inside and black on the outside -- and deco-
532 rated with a fine gilt design which makes a border, like a galloon" (1).
175*

1. Cf. G. Maspero, ibid. /Un empire colonial francais: l'Indochine. Paris, 1929-1930/, pp. 190-191.

286 Even today weaving remains women's work, and is done solely in
462 the home. The materials, which may be silk or cotton, striped or
532 splashed with colors, embroidered or spangled with gold and silver thread, nevertheless acquire, under the action of light and carefree hands, chatoyant, harmonious or dazzling tones, and yet the looms which are used are simple in the extreme. Patterns "are obtained, as before the invention of the Jacquard loom, by alternately isolating or raising certain woof threads by means of thin bamboo splints" (2).

2. Cf. L. de Reinach, ibid. /Le Laos, posthumous edition, Paris, 1911/, p. 333.

181 Thus did the Laotian of the seventeenth century live in peace, respecting the law of the least effort with an amiable perserverance amidst his laughter and his games. . . . The princes were perhaps the
/565/ only ones in the whole kingdom to know any of the worries which power and its exigencies bring, and it was for not having wished to compromise with his authoritarian principles that King Souligna, towards the end of his reign, compromised the destinies of his people forever.

643* Condemnation of the heir apparent to death. He had three chil-
175* dren, a son Tiao Ratsabout and two daughters. His son married Nang-
648* Tian-Koumali, who gave birth in her turn to two children, King-Kitsarath and Intha-Som. Nang-Tian-Koumali was the sister of a prince of the Sip-Song-Panas who had been driven out of his country by a Chinese invasion and whom the king of Lan-Xang had welcomed in Vientiane together with his family. Tiao Ratsabout, however, committed the imprudence of seducing the wife of the chief palace page. In accordance with his edict which punished the crime of
/684/ adultery by death, Souligna pitilessly referred the deceived husband's complaint to the royal tribunal and allowed his son to be sentenced to capital punishment

The result was that at the king's death, which occurred /130/ in 1694, the direct heirs to the crown were his grandsons King-Kitsarath

decently covered at all times, [198] especially in public. There is nothing to shock one's modesty, then, if their clothing is by some chance disordered or even if they take it off completely, as when bathing. It may be said that Laotians of both sexes feel the utmost repugnance to disrobing when they sense that they are observed. 832 834

Although it is true that during festivals and certain public celebrations the men parade "phalli" and make suggestive gestures, and that extremely licentious remarks are exchanged on such occasions, we should remember that all these actions are a vestige of the paganism under which the male organ was glorified as an emblem of generation. The acts are much rather the traces of a rite surviving from a religion of the earliest times than an obscene provocation made before an audience in which there are a large number of children.

The sentiment of pudicity is so very real in Laos, despite appearances to the contrary, that the laws specify comparatively heavy punishments for contact in public between individuals of opposite sexes. These penalties vary with the acts committed, which are classified in three categories: 684

1. Clasping the waist, kissing;
2. Touching the breasts, fondling;
3. Rape.

Prison, corporal punishments and fines are the penalties applied to offenders. They vary in severity depending on the rank of the girl or wife, that is to say depending on whether she is of common, noble or royal blood. Sentence may be pronounced by the court on the basis merely of a statement by the plaintiff, or on the basis of a statement by a third party, whether an eyewitness, relative, friend or simple passerby.

The fines paid by gallants who are too enterprising and not sufficiently discreet are used as offerings accompanied by propitiatory sacrifices either to the protective "Phis" of the victims or to the Spirits or Genii of their region or house. It is customary, finally, to offer a feast to nearby relatives and friends whom one may suppose to have been offended by the reprehensible acts of the guilty parties. [197] [Illustration] [198] [Blank page] [199]

Adultery. Divorce. "Since natural inclinations are rarely opposed in Laos, and since divorce is an extremely simple matter through mere mutual consent, cases of adultery are very rare.

"Divorces, on the other hand, are numerous.

149: Reinach--175 G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8
Tribal Tai 341

Building materials, interior arrangement and furniture in Thai houses do not differ in any significant way from what we have described in connection with the Laotians.

Births. Like the Laotian women, Thai women generally give birth to children with the greatest ease, and the ceremonies accompanying births are identical. 844

Marriages. Betrothals generally take place among the Thais after the farming work is over, in December or January, during the cold season. Sheds are built in the villages. Fires are laid there and the marriageable girls install themselves there with a spinning wheel, reel or cotton gin to keep them busy and prevent them from losing countenance. The young men come and join them and exchange declarations, compliments, betel quids and cigarettes with them. There it is that promises of marriage are made, which are followed by a request to the girl's parents when she gives her lover permission to do so. 584

A few days later, during a banquet which takes place in the girl's house, the engagement is announced and the young [236] people are then free to see one another and come and go together at all hours and in all places.

The marriage is not celebrated until several months after the betrothal unless traces of pregnancy are evident in the engaged girl, in which case the marriage takes place at once.

The ceremony is much simpler than among the Laotians, but it is followed by a series of banquets which succeed one another for several days and at which great quantities of rice brandy and rice beer are consumed. 585

The groom comes to live in his wife's room on his wedding day. He is supposed to stay in the home of his in-laws for eight years (only three years in some regions) and share in their work. 591

Adultery. Divorce. "Cases of adultery are extremely rare. When such an eventuality does occur, the man is condemned to a fine of seven bars of silver (about 260 francs) and the woman to a fine of six bars of the same metal (about 225 francs). Half of these sums is awarded to the judges and the other half to the husband, who may then either take back or repudiate his unfaithful wife. 586 684

"In the latter case, the unfaithful wife generally marries her accomplice.

"Divorce is rarer, but just as easy among the Thais as among 586

149: Reinach--184 G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8
Kha

291 Men's clothing consists of a jacket and pair of trousers which have the same shape as those of the Lus and are made of coarse cotton cloth manufactured locally. Their headgear is a turban cut from a piece of Turkey-red cotton.

For work, clothing is generally reduced to a narrow strip of cloth forming a belt, one of the ends of which is passed between the legs and fastened in the middle of the back.

During the cold season a jacket is added to this loin-cloth.

The women wear a skirt of the Laotian type which is fastened under the armpits so that it does not come down below the calves of the legs. A short jacket completes their costume. On their head they wear a turban which is generally dark in color. [Illustration alongside text here]

301 Jewelry. Both sexes have silver or copper jewelry such as wide stiff neckbands, bracelets, rings, buttons, clasps, etc. Like the Lus and the Youns, the Khas pierce the lobes of their ears. Often the holes are of such dimensions that a roll of leaves or a bouquet of flowers can be inserted in them.

262 Food. Their diet is very like that of the Laotians and Thais. When there is a shortage of rice its place is taken, until the following harvest, by yams, taros, bamboo sprouts, banana flowers, etc.

462 Occupations. Women and children are given the hardest tasks imaginable, and it is unusual to meet them without baskets on their backs. The men carry only their bag, their sword, their rifle and their pipe.

595 Marriage. Divorce. Adultery. Polygamy is widespread among the Khas, and the number of wives a man possesses is the sign of his wealth. For, regarded as they are rather like beasts of burden and working constantly, the more numerous these wives are the more they will produce.

584 [254] The rules for marriage preliminaries closely resemble the Laotian customs and the ceremony itself, although much less splendid, comprises the same rites. To be sure, the role of the bonzes is filled here by "Pho-Tao," that is to say elders or sorcerers.

586 Divorce may be requested by the wife, or one of the wives, for personal reasons. It may also take place by mutual consent. Finally,
684 it is compulsory in the case of adultery, since the guilty woman must marry her accomplice.

Contrary to what is the case elsewhere, adultery on the part of the husband is punished by a double fine awarded to his wife's family

Kha

586
684 and to the family of his accomplice. In a case of flagrante delicto, however, he has the right to kill the guilty parties.

[462] Kha women, when married, are renowned for their austerity, and their conduct is usually exemplary. Moreover, they are very soon disfigured by precocious and repeated childbearing, as well as by the difficult work which they do, and after two or three years of marriage the poor women are no longer tempting to anyone.

764 Deaths. Cremation is not practiced by the Khas. They bury their dead in as summary a fashion as the Lus, and for a few days bring food to the freshly filled grave. Then the latter is abandoned.

When a chief or a rich man is to be buried, the body is placed in a coffin hewn from a tree trunk.

181 Character. Like all oppressed peoples, the Khas are reserved and timid. They are afraid of innovations and new faces. But in intimate gatherings with their own people they are just as merry and love music, dances, celebrations and festivals just as much as the other peoples of Laos.

535 Music and dancing. They know certain dances imitated from
536 the Lus, pantomimes (1) which resemble the I-Ke of the Burmese,

(1) They also have the habit of performing scenes in pantomime, rather like extremely primitive ballets. We shall describe one such scene:

"A group of girls, guarded by two respectable men, are pursuing the pleasures of dancing. A rogue comes up and tries to make off with one of the girls. After a few unsuccessful attempts he succeeds in eluding the guards' vigilance, jumps forward to seize the girl on whom he has designs, and clasps her in his arms. But his happiness is too much for him and he falls senseless at the feet of the girl he wanted to abduct." (Le Laos français.) - [Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos), "Notice sur le Laos français," in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

and [255] singsong legends in which the r's and k's roll out in terrible
533 fashion. They also have songs which they accompany on flutes, clarinets and single-stringed violins. Some tribes have xylophones, these being instruments compos. d of bamboo tubes of [Illustration here] different thickness and length, each of which produces a tone varying with its size. It will be seen that by striking with a [256] stick of wood on these tubes, a combination of more or less harmonious sounds will